

NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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PUBLIC HOUSING SAFETY INITIATIVE

SIX KC MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO ARMED ROBBERIES, DRUG TRAFFICKING

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that six Kansas City, Mo., men have pleaded guilty in federal court, in three separate and unrelated cases that resulted from the district's Public Housing Safety Initiative.

These guilty pleas, Graves added, mark the first convictions under the new initiative, which was launched last year by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Housing and Urban Development to assist in the investigation, prosecution and prevention of violent crimes and drug offenses in public, federally assisted housing areas.

USA v. Brian A. Owsley

* **Brian A. Owsley**, 31, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty before U.S. Chief District Judge Dean Whipple this afternoon to being in possession with intent to distribute over 50 grams of crack cocaine. **Owsley** was the first defendant indicted in the Western District of Missouri as a result of the new initiative.

Owsley was stopped by police officers on Aug. 2, 2005. After smelling a strong odor of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle, they conducted a canine search and found a plastic bag containing 73.51 grams of crack cocaine, a plastic bag containing

approximately 25 grams of marijuana and a scale hidden inside the driver's side door panel.

Under federal statutes, **Owsley** could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to life imprisonment, plus a fine up to \$4 million.

USA v. Todge A. Anderson, et al

* **Lonnie D. Gray**, 21, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Howard F. Sachs this afternoon to brandishing a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence. **Gray** admitted that he knew co-defendant **Todge A. Anderson**, 20, of Kansas City, would brandish a firearm during the robbery of Family Laundry, 11525 Blue Ridge, Kansas City, on Oct. 5, 2005. **Anderson** used a Winchester .22-caliber rifle to commit the robbery of Family Laundry. After **Anderson ordered everyone to lie on the ground**, **Gray and an unindicted juvenile approached a customer of the laundry, who was present with her 10- and 13-year-old children, and demanded money from her.**

Under federal statutes, **Gray** could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in federal prison without parole, up to life imprisonment, plus a fine up to \$250,000 and an order of restitution.

* **Anderson pleaded guilty on Tuesday to robbing Family Laundry, to brandishing a firearm during the commission of that crime of violence, and to robbing Advanced Cellular and Page Center, 1151 Blue Ridge, Kansas City, on Oct. 10, 2005.**

Anderson admitted that he pointed the rifle directly at an employee at Family Laundry while ordering everyone to the ground. Anderson grabbed approximately \$200 from the cash register drawer, then fled along with Gray and an unindicted juvenile.

Anderson also admitted that he and co-defendant Marcus J. Hill, 19, of Kansas City, and an unindicted juvenile robbed Advanced Cellular and Page Center, which is located just blocks from Family Laundry. When the co-owner of the store became suspicious and asked them to leave, Anderson pushed her back inside and punched her in the face, demanding to know where the money was. Anderson told Hill to take the gun out, Graves said, and Hill then pointed a Winchester .22-caliber rifle directly at the woman's face. She told them there was money in the desk; Anderson punched her in the face and ordered her to get it. She showed Anderson where the money drawer was, and Anderson took approximately \$50 from the drawer. Hill jumped over the glass display case and began grabbing a large number of miscellaneous cell phones and accessories and putting them in his pockets. The co-

owner announced that there was a car pulling into the parking lot, at which time Hill struck her in the head with the butt-end of the rifle, and they all fled the business.

Anderson was arrested on Oct. 11, 2005, for a domestic violence assault, Graves said, after shooting a rifle at his ex-girlfriend. The rifle used in that assault matched the description of the rifle used in the two robberies.

Under federal statutes, Anderson could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in federal prison without parole, up to life imprisonment, plus a fine up to \$250,000 and an order of restitution.

* Hill pleaded guilty on Tuesday to brandishing a firearm during a crime of violence. Hill admitted to his role in the armed robbery of Advanced Cellular and Page Center. Hill also admitted to taking five cell phones from the business, which were taken to the nearby apartment of co-defendant Prince E. Gilbert, 19, following the robbery.

Under federal statutes, Hill could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in federal prison without parole, up to life imprisonment, plus a fine up to \$250,000 and an order of restitution.

* Gilbert pleaded guilty on Wednesday to being an accessory after the fact to the robbery of Advanced Cellular and Pager Center, by assisting co-defendants Anderson and Hill to dispose of evidence of the crime. After the robbery, Graves said, law enforcement officers followed a trail of cell phones in the parking lot and the grass that led to a nearby apartment complex. Gilbert admitted that Anderson and Hill came to his apartment immediately after the robbery and discussed the robbery while they waited, because police cars were in the area. Gilbert disposed of the cell phones and accessories in a trash bag that he put in the dumpster next to his apartment.

Under federal statutes, Gilbert could be subject to a sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$125,000 and an order of restitution.

USA v. Paul F. Vann

* Paul F. Vann, 48, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty on Tuesday to distributing five grams or more of crack cocaine on Aug. 22, 2005.

Under federal statutes, Vann could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of five years in federal prison without parole, up to 40 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$2 million.

These cases are being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew P. Wolesky. They were investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department. The Public Housing Safety Initiative is a partnership that includes the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, Independence, Mo., Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Office of Inspector General.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html